

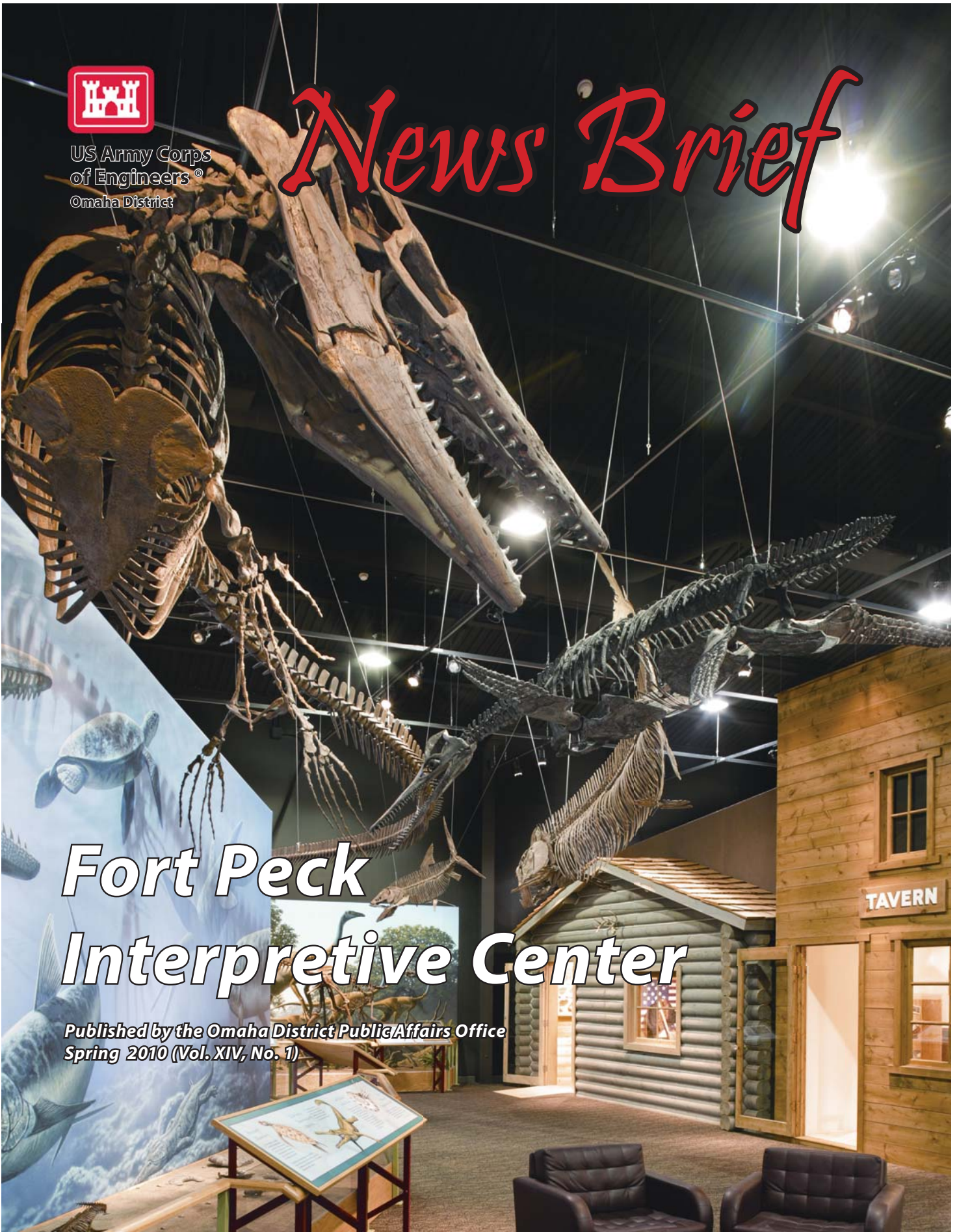


US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Omaha District

News Brief

Fort Peck Interpretive Center

Published by the Omaha District Public Affairs Office
Spring 2010 (Vol. XIV, No. 1)





**US Army Corps
of Engineers**®
Omaha District

Inside this issue...

Omaha District News Brief ■ Spring 2010

■ Volume XIV, No. 1

3

Commentary
by Col. Robert J. Ruch

4

News Briefs
Events around the district

5

Reducing the pain
ACE-IT plans Office 2007 update

6

Focus
2010 Flood fight

8

News
Volunteers serve in S.W. Asia

10

News
New dam safety classification

11

News around the district
Awards, Kudos

12

**Missouri River Recovery
Program 2010**

COVER PHOTO:



The Fort Peck Interpretive Center is ready for the thousands of visitors expected this season. (USACE photo/Harry Weddington)

Omaha District News Brief

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We stand ready

These are powerful words to live by, and the actions we take to back them up are of great consequence to families throughout the Missouri River basin at this time of year. With winter passing into spring, melting snows and spring storms will provide challenges for us, and we will be ready to deploy and execute when called on.

The Omaha District's long and proud history includes hundreds of response actions and our ability to rise to the challenges and go where we are needed is our proudest attribute.

On the topic of raising awareness and polishing skills, our Crisis Management Team recently completed a Continuity of Operations Exercise which, again, points to our readiness posture. The key element in all this is that even though we are called forth to serve special missions, our efforts do not detract from other missions.

In fact, you may recall that last year during the lengthy Jamestown flood fight – one that is held up as a superb model built on savvy and effort – we continued to execute a historic Omaha District workload.

Our history of tackling the tough jobs and still keeping our organizational balance has changed the way we are viewed in our region and in our nation. That's what we do. There are many homeowners, state officials and elected officials who feel that when they get in a fight, the Corps of Engineers is the group they want standing next to them.

The Omaha District is proud of that reputation.

We are also proud of the reputation we have for lending support to our Overseas Contingency Operations.

Our Fiscal Year 2010 Operations Plan calls for us to deliver support to combat, stability and disaster operations through forward-deployed and reach-back capabilities. Right now, our mission goal is 2.5 percent of the NWO workforce.

With 24 members of the team deployed, we are just about on target with 2.47 percent. So our readiness in many areas has far-reaching positive ramifications.

As we strive to improve workforce execution through our diligence, caring and commitment to



Col. Robert J. Ruch

goals, I know we will brace for the big challenges that lie ahead.

This district works. It executes. Thank you in advance for expending everything it takes.

Last of all, I want to mention an outstanding group of people I have come to know.

For those of you who may be close to completing your Federal careers, the Retired Omaha District Employees Organization (RODEO) offers an outstanding opportunity to stay abreast of our district's accomplishments and keep the family intact.

The group holds its spring brunch at 9:30 a.m., Monday, May 3, at the Millard Social Hall at 144th and Prairie Corners Road. A summer picnic will also be held in August, and a winter party will be held in December.

These fine people would welcome you fine people.

For information, contact Chuck Paukert at 402-234-2654.

Essayons,

Robert J. Ruch
Colonel, EN
Commanding



News Briefs

by Jill Solberg
Public Affairs Specialist

Key Events Calendar

April – June Events

April 22 - Earth Day/Arbor Day
April 27-29 – MRRIC Meeting, Bismarck, N.D.
May 3 – Retired Omaha District Employees
Organization (RODEO) Spring Brunch at Millard
Social Hall, Omaha, Neb.
May 4-5 – NWO Safety Inspection, Ft. Crook Area.
May 4-7 – National SAME Conference, Atlanta, Ga.
May 10-12 – National USACE Safety Meeting, St.

Louis, Mo.
May 15 - Armed Forces Day
May 7-19- NWD QA visit
May 18 – NWO Safety Inspection – Ft. Randall,
S.D.
May 24-28 – Regulatory National Conference,
Albuquerque, N.M.
May 31 - Memorial Day
June 14 - Flag Day

Spotlight

John Jacobson is the new chief of Contracting Division. He is a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel with 21 years active service, most recently as the commander of the 55th Contracting Squadron, Offutt AFB, Neb.

Jacobson joined the Corps in January 2010.

He is accompanied by his spouse, Carolyn, an environmental engineer, and two daughters, Helen, age 9 and Greta, age 7. The family calls Bellevue, Neb., home.

Jacobson is an outdoor enthusiast and enjoys jogging, bicycling and snowshoeing.



John Jacobson



Peterson AFB Child Development Center groundbreaking (from left) Staff Sgt. Marlene Locks, Tech. Sgt. Lonnie Locks and their four-year-old son Quentin Locks, join Peterson Air Force Base senior leaders Col. Stephen N. Whiting, 21st Space Wing commander; Col. Emily Buckman, 21st Mission Support Group commander; and Lt. Col. John Silverman, 21st Force Support Squadron commander; Lt. Col. Arno Bischoff, 21st Civil Engineer Squadron commander; Rob Dixon, base project manager for CDC facility; and invited guests Lt. Col. Quay Jones, Army Corps of Engineers; Edward Argueta, Army Corps of Engineers; Kim Malek, MaxFour principal and Hany Malek, MaxFour principal, in a ground-breaking ceremony for the Peterson East Child Development Center on Peterson Air Force Base, March 8. The \$8.1 million project is being funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Peterson East CDC will accommodate 192 children, increasing the wing's ability to provide high-quality child care to servicemembers stationed here, and is expected to open in August 2011. (U.S. Air Force photo/Craig Denton)

ACE-IT updates PCs to Office 2007 Reducing the pain

The Omaha District will update Microsoft Office 2003 software to Office 2007 in May. The bad news is that menu navigation tabs and functions have changed. The good news is that the update adds useful functions or enhancements to Word, Outlook, Access and PowerPoint that there are cross references to locate new commands for functions.

ACE-IT will send out infograms about the upgrade in the coming weeks.

ACE-IT and Microsoft have documents or interactive guides and references to ease the transition. Online demos do not require installation of the update so users may preview the features.

Some of the traditional menus and toolbars have been replaced with the Ribbon, which is part of the Microsoft

Office Fluent User interface. Commands are now organized in logical groups under tabs which relate to a type of activity, such as writing or laying out a page. is no longer needed to create PDF files.

From ACE-IT - Making the switch: <https://ace-it.usace.army.mil/education/Documents/MS%20Office%202007/ACE-IT%20Office%202007%20Making%20the%20Switch.ppt>

Microsoft Office 2007 suites and their products: <https://ace-it.usace.army.mil/support/stdprod/Pages/Microsoft%20Office%202007.aspx>

From Microsoft – Get started with the 2007 Microsoft Office System: <https://office.microsoft.com/en-us/get-started/FX101923361033.aspx>

Microsoft online help link: <https://office.microsoft.com/en-us/get-started/FX1010550808133.aspx>

FOCUS

Getting to know people, projects, program information within Omaha District

District responds to 2010 floods

by Michael Fletcher
Public Affairs Specialist

The Omaha District returned to familiar ground as the 2010 Spring flood fight took form in five communities in North Dakota, South Dakota and northwest Iowa. The district sent more than 100 members last year to the flood fight in Jamestown, N.D., on the James River and tributaries for more than three months.

“Our flood fight started on February 19 and conditions are similar to last year,” said Kim Thomas, chief of the Readiness Branch. “This year we are also embedded in communities in South Dakota and performed advance measures near Milford, Iowa.”

President Barack Obama signed a federal disaster declaration on March 14, for North Dakota, allowing state and local government access to federal resources. The Federal Emergency Management Agency was on the ground in Fargo, N.D., and working with affected communities around Jamestown.

Flooding this year were the James River and Red River in North Dakota and the Big Sioux River and Little Sioux River in South Dakota.

Iowa is included this year in the Iowa Great Lakes area in northwestern Iowa. North Dakota areas are Jamestown and LaMoure; South Dakota in the Watertown area, east of Pierre and Waubay.

The Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe have also asked for assistance.



Overland flooding near Lamoure, N.D., threatened farms and delayed Spring planting. (USACE/David Ray)



A contractor raises an existing levee at Camp Ashland, Neb., along the Platte River. (USACE/Michael Fletcher)

Camp Ashland, Neb., just west of the Platte River along Highway 6, was the center of an around-the-clock U.S. Army Corps of Engineers effort in February to raise a three-mile stretch of levees by eight feet due to potential ice jam flooding at the confluence of the Platte and Elkhorn Rivers near Ashland, Neb.

The levee runs north from the Highway 6 bridge across the Platte River to the Thomas Lakes area.

The Corps conducted an assessment of the ice conditions on the Lower Platte River which revealed a high probability of damaging flood states. In 1978 an ice jam overtopped and breached the Union Dike in the Valley-Fremont area, flooding 27,000 acres. Ice jams at the confluence of the Platte and Elkhorn caused flooding of 60,000 acres across 20 counties. Section 22 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1974, as amended, authorized the Corps to study the recurring ice jam problems. Several locations were chosen for study by the Corps' Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory, Hanover, N.H.

Corps contractor, TCW of Lincoln, Neb., welcomed the freezing weather which allowed the heavy bulldozers to push clay earth into position without bogging down in mud. TCW finished the project by Feb. 15. The section near Camp Ashland is a temporary levee that will be removed after the flooding threat has passed.

The ice on the river was estimated to be up to 18 inches thick. The Corps recommended to the Nebraska Emergency Services office that sections of the river be dusted with coal dust to speed up deterioration and ice break up.

A crop duster airplane spread several tons of coal ash as a thin layer along nine sections of the river channel. The Corps' Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory provided technical assistance. The river ice broke up three weeks later. The material used was black-bottom slag from the Nebraska Public Power District power plant at Hallam, Neb., was chosen for its dark color, low pollution and low cost.

The work is part of the Western Sarpy/Clear Creek Levee

Improvement Project with congressionally-authorized funding of \$30 million. The Corps is performing 65 percent of the project and 35 percent is divided between the State of Nebraska and the Lower Platte North, Lower Platte South and Papio Natural Resource Districts.



That's my house – Two Jamestown, N.D., residents pore over flood delineation maps with John Remus, Engineering (right), during a public meeting to discuss preparations for protecting homes and businesses from flooding in the city. Forecasts for releases from Jamestown and Pipestem reservoirs were similar to the historic flows experienced in 2009. (USACE/Paul Johnston)



A crop duster sprays a 2,500-pound load of coal ash on the Platte River, Feb. 18, just north of the Highway 6 bridge, east of Ashland, Neb. The layer of dust promotes melting to reduce potential ice jams. (USACE/Michael Fletcher).

The district closed its flood operations center in Jamestown on March 31. The district will continue to maintain a proactive regulation of discharges from the reservoirs but has reduced the response as forecasts indicated a lessening level of flood activity.

Volunteers serve in S.W. Asia

by Michael Fletcher
Public Affairs Specialist

Corps of Engineers work in Afghanistan is expanding with the establishment of Afghanistan Engineer District – South and the need for volunteers to deploy is greater than ever.

“Support to overseas contingencies operations is an absolute priority,” said Col. Robert J. Ruch, commander of the Omaha District. “I am always available to talk to you about my experiences while deployed.” Ruch previously deployed to Iraq and served as the deputy of the Baghdad Provincial Reconstruction Team.

Roger Roby, Omaha District deployment coordinator, coordinates deployments from the time of volunteers’ expression of interest until they depart for further training at the Corps’ deployment center in Winchester, Va. There are 820 positions authorized in AED and the workload is expected to increase to \$3.6 billion this year.

“I’m available anytime for information on deployments and getting volunteers ready,” Roby said. “I keep in touch with employees during their deployment and I am their liaison with the district.” The district now has 24 members in Afghanistan and Iraq. Some of our members have completed three or more tours and a few have been to both Iraq and Afghanistan.

“If a district employee has an interest in deploying for a six-month or 12-month period, they should contact me for the latest information and incentives,” Roby said. “Serving in Afghanistan presents a unique opportunity for professional, personal challenge and adventure while serving the nation.

And there are incentives. Temporary duty assignments receive locality pay from the current duty station with a TDY bonus of 12.5 percent for a six-month assignment or 25-percent for a one-year tour. Also applied are a post differential of 35 percent of base pay, danger pay of 35 percent of base pay and 25 percent extra for Sunday work. Liberal overtime hours are the norm.

Medical care in theater is provided and life insurance is guaranteed. During a six-month tour the member may take a 21-day rest and recuperation leave; for a one-year tour three R&Rs are authorized.

Jean Ramer, a regulatory project manager in Helena, Mont., is deployed to Kabul.

“This is my first time outside of the continental United States,”

erations and maintenance project manager in Kabul.

“I flew into Dubai, which has a modern, splashy airport. After spending a night in a hotel, another flight took me to Kabul. The Corps’ compound is very clean, well organized and many of the residences (living quarters) are modular, constructed out of steel shipping containers, with nice furnishings.

“Day to day stuff is basically working 11-12 hours per day, six days a week, followed by a four-hour day,” Ramer said. “It is engaging and very satisfying work. You work hard and are busy all the time. I am never bored.”

Ramer gets outside the wire once or twice a week. Getting out of the compound means travel is with two armored sports utility vehicles and two armed body guards per vehicle, plus a driver.



Family members chat with Michael Bockman, Real Estate Division, via video teleconferencing, March 26. Bockman is deployed to Afghanistan Engineer District - South. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers/Michael Fletcher)

Ramer said. “I’ve always been interested in Afghanistan, so I applied to deploy.”

Ramer is working as an op-

Ramer enjoys recreation as part of a volleyball team and a salsa dance group - entertaining as well as good exercise.

"I feel pretty safe," Ramer said. "The areas I focus on are within the secure perimeters of Afghan Army bases. We always make sure that home base knows where we are at all times. When I'm outside the wire I don't go anywhere without an armed body guard. We are in a war zone and are constantly aware of it, but its rewarding work and I'm glad I'm part of it."

"Projects here take a long time to see through to completion," she added. "Sometimes when you get your feet under you and things completed, people are reassigned or their deployment is over."

"One thing that helped me was talking to my new supervisor on the phone the week before I deployed," Ramer said. "He stressed the importance of being flexible. Things change pretty quickly around here and if you are not willing or able to roll with it, you will be very unhappy here."

Afghanistan is Electrical Engineer Drew Lange's first foreign country. In Kabul he analyzes electrical wiring plans prepared by Afghan contractors and provides quality assurance on the finished projects. His initial assignment was for six months. Lange was interviewed in Omaha while home on R&R.

"I'm extending for another 12 months," Lange said. "There are projects that I'm involved in that I want to see completed and I'd like to see more of the country."

Lange said he has no difficulties in keeping in touch with family in northern Nebraska and friends back home. His desk phone has a Virginia area code so there are no long distance charges for the family cell phone.

For information on Corps life in Afghanistan, view the AED – North monthly magazine at: <http://www.aed.usace.army.mil/FreedomBuilder.asp>.

AED – South monthly magazine at: <http://www.aed.usace>.



Jean Ramer (left), operations and maintenance project manager, with her Afghan translator. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers/Hank Heusinkveld)

army.mil/AES/EF-all.asp.

We're accepting applications from Corps members as well as qualified people outside of the Corps, Roby said. He has deployed five non-Corps applicants.

The four major construction programs are: Afghan Security Forces, U.S. and Coalition Forces construction, road water and infrastructure projects, and support for U.S. Agency for International Development,

counter narcotics, Border Management Initiative, etc.

The Capacity Development Program objective is to build the capacity of Afghan vocational and professional levels for both public and private sectors, to enable them to design, operate and maintain infrastructure in a sustainable manner.

For more information, contact Roger Roby, 402-995-2400.



Drew Lange (center), electrical engineer, with Afghan contractors, evaluates a wiring schematic. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

Corps implementing new dam safety classification

by Paul Johnston
Public Affairs Officer, Omaha District

A new dam safety classification system is being used to screen 14 Army Corps of Engineers dams in the Omaha and Lincoln, Neb., areas. They are being screened using a new risk-informed process to establish priorities for investigations and remediation work on a national basis.

The Corps released an Engineering Circular on May 31, 2007, titled, "Interim Risk Reduction Measures for Dam Safety" which defines the new Dam Safety Action Classification system. It places dams into five classes: DSAC I dams have the highest priority for action and DSAC V dams the lowest.

DSAC V dams are considered safe and in compliance with all current criteria. Interim risk reduction measure plans must be developed for all DSAC I, II and III dams to reduce risks while long-term solutions are investigated and implemented.

These interim measures include updating the Emergency Action Plans and conducting training exercises with emergency management agencies. At some projects, interim risk reduction measures may also include performing repairs and installing additional instrumentation to better monitor the project.

There are four Corps-owned dams on the Papillion Creek system in the Omaha area. They are Glen Cunningham, Standing Bear, Zorinsky, and Wehrspann. Three of them received a DSAC IV rating and require no interim risk reduction measures.

Cunningham received a DSAC III rating primarily due to concerns with settlement that occurred during and shortly after construction and may have resulted in damage to the embankment of the dam.

Investigations are planned to verify if the embankment has actually been damaged as a result of settlement.

There are ten Corps-owned dams on the Salt Creek system in the Lincoln area. They are Olive Creek, Blue Stem, Wagon Train, Stage Coach, Yankee Hill, Conestoga, Twin Lakes, Pawnee, Holmes Lake, and Branched Oak. Five of them received a DSAC IV rating and require no interim risk reduction measures. They are Blue Stem, Yankee Hill, Conestoga, Twin Lakes and Pawnee.

Olive Creek, Wagon Train, Stage Coach, Holmes Lake, and Branched Oak received a DSAC III rating primarily due to potential seepage issues, particularly along the outlet conduits. The conduit issues will be assessed and appropriate repairs made. Studies will also be performed to determine if other seepage issues exist at any of these projects.

A reevaluation to determine the amount of available freeboard resulting from an extreme precipitation event is planned at all 10 of the Salt Creek dams. Such a weather event is called the "Probable Maximum Precipitation" and the probability of this event occurring is extraordinarily low.

There is no evidence to suggest an emergency situation exists, or is about to occur at any of the Nebraska dams with a DSAC III rating. Studies and appropriate repairs will be made at each of these dams to correct any confirmed dam safety problems.

HooahMail: fast delivery to remote Afghanistan bases

The Army's HooahMail program makes it possible for friends and family members to put a paper letter and photograph into the hands of loved ones in Afghanistan, in some cases, the same day they're sent.

The one-year pilot program began Dec. 1, and combines the Internet with physical mail delivery to create a hybrid mail system that can get letters into the hands of Soldiers in remote locations much faster than regular mail delivery alone.

"This gives Soldiers actual printed correspondence that is sent from their family members that they can take out on a mission with them and read and reread again," said Bill Hilsher, Army postal program manager.

Family members who want to send a letter and a photograph to a Soldier in Afghanistan should log into the program's Web site at www.hooahmail.us. There, they type in their message and

attach a digital photo. They also add delivery information for their Soldier, as though they were addressing a paper envelope.

The electronic letter is sent via the Internet to one of 10 locations in Afghanistan where special equipment will automatically print it, fold it, stuff it into an envelope, address it and seal it. The sealed envelopes are then placed into the regular intra-theater APO mail

delivery system.

"Compared to traditional mail, (the electronic letter) reduces it from an average of 14 days down to same-day or next-day, ready for delivery," Hilsher said.

The HooahMail program is free for family members and friends, and is available for Soldiers in Afghanistan only. ♦
— C. Todd Lopez/ARNEWS



World War II Soldiers receive letters from home during mail call. Then, mail took weeks to arrive, but HooahMail can reach Afghanistan in a day.

Employees make a difference for Afghan refugees, charity

The Volunteer Community Relations program in Kabul, Afghanistan, has benefitted from the generosity of Omaha District employees.

Engineering Division's Ron Beyer and Northwestern Division's Kathy Jensen headed up a clothing drive to help more than 900 refugee families, as well as children in a juvenile detention facility, in Kabul.

"I was amazed at the amount of clothing that came in a relatively short period of time," said Beyer. "And monetary donations were more than enough to get everything shipped."

Approximately 475 pounds of clothing were shipped at a cost of \$436.73. Items that were deemed inappropriate (shirts with flags, etc.) were donated to a local charity. Excess funds have been deposited in the Omaha District

Chief of Engineers award winners

Congratulations to 2010 Chief of Engineers Annual Natural Resources Management Award winners.

Winners for Northwestern Division are:

Jolene Hulsing, Missouri River Project Office is the NWD nomination for NRM Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence.

The NRM Project of the Year nomination - Oahe Project, Omaha District.

NWD's NRM Employee of the Year Award for Environmental Stewardship nomination to USACE:- Mr. Galen D. Jons, Natural Resource Specialist, Omaha District.

Their nomination packets have been forwarded to HQ for national consideration.

Public Affairs wins Corps journalism awards

The Omaha District Public Affairs Office won two categories in the Corps' 2009 Herbert A. Kassner Journalism Competition.

Winning the Special Achievement in Print Media award was the Omaha District's Projects, Products and Services ... Celebrating 75 Years of Excellence, a hard-cover well illustrated book about the accomplishments of the district over its 75 years of existence.

Winning the Community Relations Special Event award was the districts Emergency Response to Flooding in Jamestown, N.D. community relations plan.

"This competition highlights the important fact that "Building Strong" is not just for engineers, architects, and scientists," said Lieut. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, chief of engineers. "It applies equally to journalists, lawyers, accountants, park rangers, and all the career fields in the

Corps of Engineers. The people, organizations and products listed below are raising the bar as we go from 'good to great' in communication. Congratulations to all the winners!"

The public affairs office will receive Golden Quill awards and letters signed by General Van Antwerp for both of the winning entries.

The competition is named for Herb Kassner, a public affairs officer of the Lower Mississippi Valley Division (predecessor of MVD) in the 1980s.

Omaha District wins platinum 19 years in a row

For the 19th consecutive year, the National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter, will honor the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, with its Platinum Award.

The Omaha District will receive the honor May 20, during the annual awards luncheon at the Safety and Health Summit, Qwest Center, Omaha. The award is given to organizations that demonstrate a pattern of organizing and maintaining superior safety and health programs.

"It's an honor to be recognized once again as one of the safest companies in Omaha," said Melissa Johnson, chief of the Safety Office. "Safety is a number one priority at the Omaha District and this award is a reflection of that emphasis."

Each year, more than 1,200 applicants compete for the award. The competition includes companies such as Peter Kiewit, ConAgra, Union Pacific, and the Air Force.

The safety review for the award pertains to annual recordable cases, lost work day cases, days away, and restricted and transferred statistics. The committee of safety professionals also considers the internal components of each organization's safety program, as well as how each company works to develop a successful program.

Overall, the Omaha District exceeded the industry average in every case by more than 80 percent.



Missouri River Recovery Program propelled into new year

by Kevin Quinn
Public Affairs Specialist

The Missouri River Recovery Program is a “seven-year old program with serious momentum. Its many accomplishments are the result of the team’s outstanding efforts,” says Program Manager Mike George of the Omaha District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“First of all, we are creating habitat that is benefitting wildlife and bolstering the ecosystem. Secondly, we have a robust science program which helps us determine how effective our habitat is. Third, we coordinate with the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee, a solid stakeholder’s group with a clear focus and understanding of social and economic needs of the basin. MRRIC is an outstanding organization that stood up smartly in 2008-09,” said George

The MRRP may face some challenges in 2010, but George expects the accomplishments of 2009 to act as a springboard to continued success.

The “highly successful campaign of 2009” revolved around \$57.4 million worth of work, and an extra \$6 million in “stimulus” projects, for a total program of \$63.4 million,” said George. The total program for 2010 is \$56.7 million, and a possibility for additional stimulus work exists.

“We made lots of progress in 2009 – we designed and implemented the program and we know how we want to do things in the future,” George said.

The top successes of 2009 included seven programs:

1. Emergent Sandbar Habitat projects constructed below Gavins Point Dam. Those sandbars produced 80 percent of the interior least terns and piping plovers that fledged on the lower river. High waters and flows in 1997 resulted in only one successful nest in the area. In 2009 there were more than 100 nesting pairs. The Corps’ monitoring program collects both biological and physical data at selected sites. The data is spatially located using GPS equipment.

2. The integrated science program documented successful spawn of the pallid sturgeon. The program is currently studying why some pallids spawn but do not mature and if predators, water temperatures, and flows are factors.

3. The success of the shallow water habitat program. Among the highlights was the \$4 million, 110 acre project at Tyson Bend near Blair, Neb. that drew public attention and editorial acclaim. It not only provides habitat for the endangered pallid sturgeon, but also other native fish, eagles, hawks, deer and great blue herons with conditions close to those existing before the six major dams were built on the Missouri.

4. The acquisition of a 2,372 acre tract of land on Audubon Bend in Cedar County, Neb. This will be a home to both sandbar and shallow water habitat projects. The National Park Service designated this as a priority acquisition at a cost of \$10.6 million.

5. The partnership developed with the National Resource Conservation Service. Two successful projects were constructed on easements held by the NRCS in 2009, the Bullard Bend Backwater project in Harrison County, Iowa (river mile 664 - 667, left bank) and the Middle Decatur Bend chute in Monona County, Iowa (river mile 687 - 689, left bank).

6. Real Estate acquisition -- The Omaha District team set a record in 2009, acquiring 2,666 acres, worth \$7,359,296. Both figures are second only to 2007 when Congress appropriated \$85 million to the program. Last year’s effort served as a springboard to 2010. The team has acquired 2,372 acres in the first quarter this fiscal year. The annual average is 2,500 acres.

7. Dike notching and extension projects are ongoing on existing river control structures south of Omaha. A total of 11 bends are identified for construction while 116 structures will have either new or modified notches. Some 73,500 tons of riprap will be placed on 35 dikes identified for extension.

Other key accomplishments, according to George:

Boyer Bend / Lower Calhoun Backwaters and Chute in Washington County, Nebraska - River mile 634 - 638 right bank). The one-million cubic yard project cost \$3.8 million and is 90 percent complete.

Middle Decatur Bend, Neb., is an off-channel chute completed in 2009 at a cost of about \$1.4 million.

Tobacco Island Chute Modifications on the Platte River in Cass County, Neb. (River mile 589 – 586, right bank) is an ongoing \$2.5-million project designed and ready to be awarded.

Fawn Island Chute, in Harrison County, Iowa (river mile 674, left bank) is a completed revetment-lowering project costing about \$1.2 million.

Bullard Bend is a backwater project done in cooperation with the NRCS at a cost of about \$1.4 million.

Emergent sandbar habitat: Awarded construction contracts for habitat sites at river miles 781.0 and 781.4 near Vermillion, S.D. and at river mile 842 near the mouth of the Niobrara River. Cost was about \$1.5 million each.

Value engineering studies for mitigation, habitat construction, the Cottonwood Reforestation program, and Yellowstone Intake Diversion Dam (Mont.) project identified \$20 million in cost savings.